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(54) Title: LIPOSOMES

(57) Abstract

Novel liposomes have a mean diameter not exceeding 200 nm and containing at least 33 mg of one or more entrapped substances per g liposome-forming material. They may also comprise, co-entrapped or covalently linked in the same liposome, a synthetic peptide and an adjuvant which potentiates the immunogenicity of the peptide. The liposomes are useful in vaccines.

## LIPOSOMES

### Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to liposome preparations
which combine small size with very high retention of added
5    substances.    The  present  invention  also  relates  to
liposomes containing synthetic peptides, e.g. for use in
vaccines.

### Background of the Invention

High efficiency entrapment (retention) of substances
10   using minimal amounts of lipid is a prerequisite for the
effective use of liposomes in a variety of applications.
For example, a high entrapped drug to lipid mass ratio is
necessary for an acceptable cost of formulation and an
acceptable  low  risk  of  lipid-induced  toxicity  for
15   pharmaceutical  use.    Unfortunately,  current  liposome
preparations  and  methodologies  giving  high  efficiency
entrapment, as described by Szoka et al, Proc. Nat. Acad.
Sci. USA 75 (1978) 4194-4198, and by Kirby and Gregoriadis,
Biotechnology 11 (1984) 979-984, result in large liposomes,
20   having mean diameters approaching 1 μm in size. This large
size severely limits, for example, pharmaceutical use: such
large liposomes, on intravenous injection, exhibit short
half-lives in blood circulation; see Senior et al, Biochim.
Biophys.  Acta  839  (1985)  1-8.    They  are  therefore
25   unsuitable  for  maintaining  increased  concentrations  of
drugs and other substances within the vascular system.  In
addition, such large liposomes are unsuitable for use as
delivery systems for targeting of drugs or other substances
to specific sites, for example to diseased cells in the
30   body.

Smaller liposomes, 200 nm or less in diameter, are
considerably more stable, for example in the bloodstream,
than the larger liposomes described above.  Other features
of smaller liposomes for pharmaceutical applications are
35   that, unlike larger liposomes, they are able to reach the
lymph nodes efficiently and to deliver vaccines and other
agents to these sites: see Senior et al , loc. cit.; Turner

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_et al_, Biochim. Biophys. Acta 760 (1983) 119-125; Allen _et al_, FEBS Letters 223 (1987) 42-46; Chow _et al_, Pharmacol. Exper. Ther. 248 (1989) 506-513; and Spanzer _et al_, Biochim. Biophys. Acta 836 (1986) 224-230.   However,
5   current techniques for preparing small liposomes, as described by Mayhew _et al_, Biochim. Biophys. Acta 775 (1984) 169-174, suffer from either a low efficiency of entrapment of substances or from a large lipid requirement (180 μmol per ml or greater) for efficient entrapment.
10        Most current vaccine preparations for infectious disease comprise either attenuated or killed infectious agents.   Such preparations suffer from problems such as safety, for example reversion of attenuated to virulent strains, and lack of effectiveness, for example an
15   incidence of non-responsive recipients.   There is widespread interest in the possibility of synthetic peptide vaccines, especially against viral, bacterial and parisitic diseases (see Arnon, Synthetic Vaccines, 1987 (vols. 1 and 2), CRC Press Inc.) and, more recently, in cancer.  The
20   principle of a synthetic peptide vaccine is that the protective epitopes on, for example, infectious agents are copied as short synthetic peptides free of any infectious agent.  In order to be effective, a synthetic peptide must possess a high level of immunogenicity and induce
25   antibodies which cross-react extensively with the target organism or cell; see Van Regenmortel, Immunology Today 10 (1989) 266-272.   In practice, peptides alone tend to possess weak immunogenicity, and anti-peptide antibodies often do not recognise the native protein antigen; see
30   Jemmerson _et al_, Molecular Immunology 26 (1989) 301-307.
        A common method for enhancing the immunogenicity of synthetic peptide epitopes is to combine the peptides with an immunological adjuvant.  Adjuvants are agents which provoke potent immune responses to antigens, and include
35   aluminium hydroxide (alum), saponins, pluronic p lymers with mineral oil, killed mycobacterium in mineral il (Freund's complete adjuvant), bacterial products such as

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muramyl dipeptide, and immunogenic carrier proteins such as
tetanus t xoid.   Adjuvants, depending  n their nature,
induce humoural (HI) and/or cell-mediated immunity (CMI).
However, most of such adjuvants are either unsuitable for
5   combination with peptides, have toxic side-effect problems,
or fail to induce both HI and CMI; see Gregoriadis,
Immunology Today 11 (1990) 89-97.  A further problem is
interference of peptide immunogenicity by immune response
to a carrier protein; see Etlinger et al, Science 249
10   (1990) 423-425.

As described elsewhere (see Gregoriadis, loc. cit.),
liposomes have the potential for a safe and effective
adjuvant for peptide vaccines, and the immunopotentiation
of a number of synthetic peptides has been shown.  However,
15   such immunopotentiation by liposomes is not a general
phenomenon.  For example, liposomal immunopotentiation has
not been observed with a pre-S peptide (amino acids 15-48)
from Hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) or with a 3VP2
peptide from poliovirus.

20   Summary of the Invention

Novel, small liposomes have a mean diameter less than
200 nm and high entrapment efficiency, and require low
(<150 μmols per ml) concentrations of starting lipid.  They
are suitable for use in a variety of applications,
25   including, for example, cosmetics for the sub-epidermal
delivery of substances by liposomes, medical diagnostics
for the stable entrapment of easily measurable substances,
and pharmaceuticals (as described above).

Further, novel synthetic peptide vaccine preparations
30   comprise liposomes containing entrapped or covalently-
linked peptides together with molecules which augment the
immune response to the peptides.

Description of the Invention

Examples of substances that may be entrapped in
35   liposomes  f the invention are pharmac uticals, vaccines,
genetic   materials,   enzymes,   hormones,   vitamins,
carbohydrates,   proteins/peptides,   lipids,   organic

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molecules, and inorganic molecules or at ms. More specific
examples are anti-tumour and anti-microbial agents,
enzymes, hormones, vitamins, metal chelators and genetic
material, preferably carbohydrates or proteins/peptides.
5       The liposomes may be incorporated into vaccines.

        The liposomes may be produced from one or more of
phosphatidylcholine, cholesterol, phosphatidylglycerol,
phosphatidylethanolamine, phosphatidylserine, phosphatidic
acid, sphingomyelin or derivatives of these lipids,
10      preferably phosphatidylcholine or cholesterol. The process
for their preparation may be from a starting lipid
concentration of less than 150 $\mu$mols per ml, to provide an
efficiency of entrapment of >10% of a starting substance
concentration. The method involves a combination of the
15      dehydration-rehydration vesicle (DRV) process (see Kirby
and Gregoriadis, loc. cit.) and the microfluidation process
described by Talsma et al, Drug Development Ind. Pharm. 15
(1989) 197-207. Briefly, the method involves mixing lipids
with substances to be entrapped and subjecting the mixture
20      to controlled dehydration and rehydration to form large
multilamellar vesicles with high entrapment efficiency.
These large vesicles are then subject to microfluidation to
produce small liposomes with 10-100% retention of the
entrapped substances.

25      As will be apparent from the evidence given below,
microfluidisation of solute-containing DRV's in PBS and the
presence of unentrapped solute produces vesicles less than
200 nm in size, and which are suitable for the given
purposes. Such vesicles retain, under the present
30      conditions, 35-78% of the originally entrapped solute.
Compared to procedures (Mayhew et al, loc. cit.) which
employ much larger amounts of lipid to achieve efficient
entrapment, the present approach provides preparations with
augmented solute to lipid mass ratios and should also be
35      more economical. The narrow distribution of final vesicle
sizer must reflect the nature of the production process.
Whereas sonication disrupts vesicles in a random mode,

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producing a wide range of diam' ers, microfluidisation
distorts large and flexible vesicles by extrusion through
a capillary, thereby increasing the number of vesicles of
similar size which "bud off" from simple parent vesicles.

5        While being applicable across the broad range of the
invention, the minimum amount of retained solute is 35%,
i.e. 2.5 mg with respect to a starting amount of 7.2 mg of
the relevant substance. This is for up to 66 μmoles, i.e.
up to 50 mg, phosphatidylcholine (approximate molecular
10    weight 760) up to 25 mg cholesterol (molecular weight 387).
Therefore, by means of the present invention, it is
possible to produce liposomes having mean diameters of less
than 200 nm which contain at least 50 mg of the entrapped
substance per g phospholipid or at least 33 mg of the
15    substance per g of liposome-forming materials. In Example
1, the liposomes retain approximately 35-78% of the
originally entrapped test substances maltose or tetanus
toxoid (herein referred to as solutes) following
microfluidisation. This corresponds to an overall solute
20    entrapment yield of >10%.

For example when including one or more adjuvants,
liposome preparations are made by standard methods for
producing liposomes, for example as described by
Gregoriadis, ed., Liposome Technology (1984) vols. 1 to 3,
25    CRC Press Inc. In such methods, liposome components,
peptides and adjuvant molecules are either mixed or
covalently linked prior to formation of liposomes.

The following Examples illustrate the invention, with
reference to literature articles given above and also to
30    Deamer and Uster, Liposome Preparation: Methods and
mechanisms in: ed. Ostro, Liposomes, M¯rcel Dekker, Inc.,
New York, 1983, pp 27-51; Gregoriadi.. et al, Vaccine 5
(1987) 145-151; and Davis and Gregoriadis, Immunology 61
(1987) 229-234.

35        The source and grades of egg phosphatidylcholine (PC)
and cholesterol have been reported elsewhere (Kirby and
Gregoriadis, 1984). Maltos was from Sigma Chemical

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Company (London) and immunopurified tetanus toxoid from
Wellc me Biotechnol gy (Beckenham). D-[U-$^{14}$C]-maltose (20
GBq per $\mu$mol) was purchased from Amersham International
(Amersham, U.K.) and toxoid-labelled (specific activity
5.43 mBq) with $^{125}$I as described elsewhere (Gregoriadis et
al, 1987).

The following abbreviations are used:

60 psi = 414 kPa

PBS    - Phosphate-Buffered Saline

PC     - Phosphatidylcholine

DRV    - Dehydration-Rehydration Vesicles

SUV    - Small Unilamellar Vesicles

dpm    - disintegration per minute

Example 1

Preparation of liposomes

Solute-containing DRV liposomes were prepared by the
procedure discussed elsewhere (Kirby and Gregoriadis, 1984;
Gregoriadis et al, 1987). Briefly, small

unilamellar vesicles (SUV) made in distilled water from equimolar PC (16.5, 33, 66 or 132 $\mu$mol) and cholesterol were mixed with an equal volume (2.0 ml) of maltose (7.2 mg) or tetanus toxoid (7.2 mg) dissolved in PBS (0.44mM sodium phosphate, 2.7mM potassium chloride and 0.14 M sodium chloride, pH 7.4) and supplemented with traces (4.9 x $10^5$ - 8.7 x $10^5$. dpm) of the respective radiolabelled solutes. Following dehydration and controlled (Kirby and Gregoriadis, 1984) rehydration to form solute-containing DRV, the suspensions (2.0 ml) were each divided into two equal portions. One portion was centrifuged at 20,000g for 30 min, the pellet washed three times with PBS and suspended in 20 ml of the same buffer (washed DRV) for microfluidization. Entrapment of solutes was estimated by the assay (Kirby and Gregoriadis, 1984; Gregoriadis et al, 1987) of $^{14}C$ or $^{125}I$ radioactivity in the suspension, and results expressed as percentage of the solute originally present. The other portion (containing a mixture of entrapped and unentrapped solute) was also diluted in 20 ml PBS (unwashed DRV) and then microfluidized. In some experiments, PBS was replaced by distilled water in all steps involved in the entrapment of solutes in DRV and microfluidization of washed or unwashed preparations.

## Microfluidization of liposomes

Washed and unwashed DRV (20 ml each) were passed for 1.8, 3.5, 5.2, 7.1 and 10.6 full cycles through a Microfluidizer 110™ kindly provided by Microfluidics Corp., Newton, MA, USA.  The pressure gauge was set at 60 psi throughout the procedure to give a flow rate of 35 ml per minute. At the end of each of the 20 ml cycle intervals, samples containing maltose were dialysed exhaustively

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against distilled water or PBS, and the toxoid containing vesicles or centrifuged

for 30 min at 20,000g (1.8 and 3.5 cycles) or 35,000g (5.2, 7.1 and 10.6 cycles), the

pellets washed twice in PBS or water and resuspended in 1.0 ml of the

respective solvents. In the case of the toxoid, the supernatants obtained on

centrifugation were passed (Senior et al, 1985) through Sepharose 4B columns;

very little (less than 3%) of the solute in the centrifuged samples eluted in the

liposome form. The extent to which washed and unwashed DRV's retained their

solute content after microfluidization was estimated as follows: for washed

DRV'S, radioactivity retained after dialysis or recovered in pellets after

centrifugation was expressed as a percentage of the total amount in the sample

before dialysis or centrifugation. Solute retention values thus obtained correspond

to the percentage of the original entrapment values in the preparations before

microfluidization. For unwashed DRV, the percentage of radioactivity retained

after dialysis or centrifugation was expressed as % of the original entrapment

values.


Measurement of vesicle size


Particle size distributions were measured by photon correlation spectroscopy of

samples diluted in either water or PBS, using a Malvern Model 4700 apparatus

(Malvern Instruments Ltd., Malvern, UK) equipped with a 25mW helium/neon

laser. Mean diameters and size distributions are obtained: the z-average mean

diameter, polydispersity factor and cumulative percentage mass and number

undersize data were recorded as a function of the number of microfluidization

cycles. The performance of the instrument was checked with monodisperse

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polystyrene latex suspensions (Polysciences, UK) and mixtures of such latex

samples to verify the ability of the system to accurately measure polydisperse or

bidisperse systems.


Results and Discussion

The effect of DRV microfluidization on solute retention


As expected from previous work (Kirby and Gregoriadis, 1984; Gregoriadis et al

1987), entrapment of solutes in dehydration-rehydration liposomes was efficient,

ranging from 19.2 to 66.1% of the starting material and dependent on the

amount of phospholipid used (see legends to Figs 1-3). There was no

significant difference in entrapment values in preparations made in distilled

water or PBS (not shown). Retention values (quoted as a percentage of original

entrapment values) by solute-containing DRV's microfluidized for up to 5.2

cycles in the presence of PBS are shown in Figs 1 and 2. It is apparent that

retention values by both washed and unwashed DRV decrease or remain the

same as the number of cycles increases (see also Fig. 3). Thus, values of 80-100%

(maltose) after 1.8 cycles become 40-65% after 5.2 cycles (Fig. 1), whereas values

for the toxoid (unwashed DRV) remain virtually unchanged (at around 75%)

(Fig. 2). It is conceivable that during microfluidization, a process entailing

breakage of the integrity of vesicle membrane and consequent leakage of entrapped

solute occurs, large molecules such as proteins leak · at slower rates than

smaller molecules. Furthermore, no apparent difference in solute retention was

observed for preparations containing varying amounts of PC (8.5-66 μmoles) (Figs.

1 and 2). Figs. 1 and 2 also indicate that, generally, a greater proportion of

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solute (maltose or toxoid) is retained by unwashed vesicles (ie. preparations microfluidized in the presence of unentrapped solute) than by washed DRV. The presence of unentrapped solute during microfluidization diminishes solute leakage perhaps by reducing the osmotic rupture of the vesicles and by reducing initial concentration gradients across the membrane.

The mean diameter of microfluidized DRVs measured by dynamic light scattering after a given cycle interval depended on whether the DRVs were suspended in distilled water or PBS. We therefore attempted to determine the effect of the two media on solute retention during microfluidization. Results in Fig. 3 indicate that much more maltose is retained by DRVs in the presence of PBS and similar results (not shown) were obtained with toxoid-containing DRV's under identical conditions. Such an effect of PBS presence in the milieu could be attributed to its reduction of osmotic shock expected (Kirby and Gregoriadis, 1984) to occur on dilution of solute-containing DRV in hypotonic media.

The effect of microfluidization on vesicle size

The mean diameters of washed and unwashed maltose-containing DRV microfluidized in water or PBS (from experiment described in Fig. 3), measured by photon correlation spectroscopy, are presented in Table 1. They show that, in agreement with findings by others (Talsma et al, 1989), a smaller vesicle size was achieved for preparations processed in water than in PBS. Such differences in sizes, appearing after the 1.8 cycle interval, could be attributed (Deamer and Uster, 1983) to vesicle aggregation induced by the presence of salts in the PBS

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medium, but also might be due to the increased lipophilicity of the lipids in the
presence of electrolyte.   Reduction in the size of all preparations tested was
considerable after the initial 1.8 cycles interval. Subsequently, sizes levelled off to
reach minimal values of 100-160 nm by 10.6 cycles depending on the medium
(water or PBS) (it is of interest that a pattern similar to that of sizes in Table 1
was observed for solute retention with increasing cycle intervals (Fig.3), with
values also levelling off after 3.5 cycles). Mean number diameter and mass
diameter distribution data (Fig. 4 and Fig. 5) from the experiments recorded in
Table 1 revealed a bimodal distribution of sizes in which there is an increasing
number of small vesicles as the number of microfluidization cycles increases
beyond the first few cycles; the mean number diameter of the sample, prepared
in water (50mg maltose/water) is of the order of 300nm after 1.8 cycles, with a
few vesicles with diameters up to 1μm in diameter. The larger diameter vesicles
disappear rapidly on increasing cycling, so that after 10.6 cycles in water, a
single narrow diameter (around 100 nm) distribution is obtained whereas in PBS
the bimodal pattern is retained (Fig 4). However, the vesicle size distribution
does not exhibit the gradual downward drift that occurs on, say, sonication but a
transfer of sizes from one size band to another. In PBS, some vesicles
undoubtedly flocculate so that there remains a percentage of vesicles with a high
apparent diameter.   Fig. 6 illustrates the distribution of diameters by mass.
Here is clear evidence of the marked narrowing of the polydispersity of the
vesicles.   Coupled with the data from Fig. 4, this figure clearly shows the
narrow distribution of sizes which is achieved after 10 cycles.   Lidgate and
coworkers' (1989) results show that in preparing parenteral emulsions of
squalene by microfluidization, the particle size after 9-10 cycles is in the range of

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0.07 to 0.2 μm which represent a much narrower distributi n than other technol gies.

Table 1 shows the average mean size (nm) of microfluidised DRV, i.e. maltose-containing washed or unwashed DRV (33 μmoles) PC were microfluidised in the presence of water or PBS for up to 10.6 cycles and samples measured for vesicle size (diameter in nm) by dynamic light scattering (Photon correlation spectroscopy). Polydispersity indexes ranging from 0.503 to 0.653 (water) and 0.517 to 0.653 (PBS) were similar to those obtained with some of the lipid compositions of liposomes employed by Talsma et al (1987).

Table 1. z - Average mean size (nm) of microfluidised DRV

| DRV | Cycles | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | 1.8 | 3.5 | 5.2 | 7.1 | 10.6 |
| Washed Water | 463.5 | 149.9 | 115.0 | 121.9 | 114.7 |
| PBS | 447.4 | 198.6 | 168.1 | 159.5 | 155.7 |
| Unwashed Water | 473.9 | 132.9 | 116.9 | 116.6 | 101.9 |
| PBS | 456.3 | 186.2 | 186.8 | 169.8 | 159.9 |

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## Description of the Drawings

Figure 1 shows entrapment values (on a scal of 0-100% of originally entrapped starting material) for $^{14}$C-labelled maltose by DRVs following microfluidisation, with respect to cycles on the abscissa. $^{14}$C-maltose containing DRVs composed of equimolar phosphatidylcholine (PC) and cholesterol were microfluidised in the washed (filled bars) or unwashed (shaded bars) forms in the presence of PBS for up to 5.2 cycles. Amounts of liposomal phospholipid passed through the microfluidiser were 8.25 (A), 16.5 (B), 33 (C) and 66 (D) μmols. Values denote % retention of the originally entrapped $^{14}$C-maltose. Original entrapment values were 27.1 (A), 33.6 (B), 66.1 (C) and 65.7 (D).

Figure 2 shows entrapment values for $^{125}$I-labelled tetanus toxoid by DRVs following microfluidisation. Details are as in Figure 1 except that amounts of liposomal phospholipid passed through the microfluidiser were 8.25 (A) and 33 (B) μmols and original entrapment values were 19.2 (A) and 56 (B).

Figure 3 shows the effect of the liquid medium on $^{14}$C-maltose retention by DRVs during microfluidisation. Details are as in Figure 1 except that DRVs were m_crofluidised i. the presence of distilled water (A) or PBS (B) for up to 10.6 cycles, the amount of liposomal phospholipid passed through the microfluidiser was 33 μmols and original entrapment values were 54.3 (A) and 55.2 (B).

Figure 4 shows the size distribution (as a percentage number) of vesicles containing maltose prepared in the presence of water as a function of the number of cycles (Δ = 10.6 cycles; ■ = 3.5 cycles; O = 1.8 cycles) through the microfluidiser, showing progression to a mean distribution with a mean diameter (on the abscissa) of approximately 100 nm after 10.6 cycles.

Figure 5 is on the same basis as Fig. 4. It shows the size distribution of vesicles containing maltose prepared in the presence of PBS (50 mg maltose/PBS) as a function of the number of cycles through the microfluidiser, showing

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that, after 10.6 cycles, th number of vesicles with diameters greater than 300 nm is decreased but a biphasic distribution is still maintained.

Figure 6 shows the mass distribution of vesicles
5    containing maltose (50 mg maltose/water) as a function of cycles through the microfluidiser as in Figure 4, showing the narrow distribution size after 10.6 cycles.

Example 2

This Example shows that interleukin-2 (IL-2) acts as
10   an effective adjuvant for the poliovirus 3-VP2 peptide when entrapped with the peptide in the same liposome. Balb/c mice were injected intramuscularly in groups of five on days 0 and 28 with either 5 μg free 3-VP2 peptide, or with liposomes containing 5 μg peptide, or with liposomes
15   containing 5 μg peptide and 7000 Cetus units of IL-2 (recombinant mutein IL-2, obtained from Cetus). Liposomes were formed from equimolar distearoyl phosphatidylcholine and cholesterol using the dehydration-rehydration procedure (see Kirby and Gregoriadis, 1984). Ten days following the
20   second injection, serum IgG antibodies specific for 3-VP2 peptide were estimated by ELISA assay (see Davis and Gregoriadis, 1987) whereby microtitre wells were coated with 3-VP2 peptide, diluted sera samples (1:1280 for IgG1, 1:160 for other subclasses) were added, and bound IgG's
25   were measured through binding of IgG subclass specific antibodies. The ELISA signal measured as optical density at 492 nm was produced using horseradish peroxidase-labelled second-antibody and 3,3',5,5'-tetramethylbenzidine (Miles) as substrate. Table 2 gives the results of the IgG
30   subclass ELISA (median values underlined). Comparison by Kruskall-Wallis statistical analysis of values for groups of animals receiving liposomal 3-VP2 and liposomal 3-VP2/IL-2 revealed a significant elevation of IgG levels due to the effect of IL-2 for all IgG subclasses except IgG2b.

35   Example 3

SJL H-2' mice were injected intramuscularly in gr ups of five on days 0 and 28 with either 20 μg free pre-S

p ptide  r with lipos mes containing 20 $\mu$g pre-S peptide or
with liposomes containing 20 $\mu$g S peptide and 20 $\mu$g pre-S
peptide.      Liposomes were formed from equimolar egg
phosphatidylcholine and cholesterol using the dehydration-
5    rehydration procedure (see Kirby and Gregoriadis, 1984).
Ten days following the second injection, serum IgG
antibodies specific for pre-S peptide were estimated by
ELISA assay (see Davis and Gregoriadis, 1987), whereby
microtitre wells were coated  with pre-S peptide, diluted
10   samples (1:640) were added, and bound $IgG_1$ was measured
through binding of $IgG_1$ specific antibodies.   The ELISA
signal measured as optical density at 492 nm was produced
using horseradish peroxidase-labelled second-antibody and
3,3',5,5' tetramethylbenzidine (Miles) as substrate. Table
15   3 gives the results of the $IgG_1$ subclass by ELISA (median
values underlined).

Statistical analysing by Kruskall-Wallis revealed
highly significant increase in IgGI response to pre-S
peptide for liposomes with co-entrapped pre-S and S
20   peptides.

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| Peptide formulation | Secondary immune response | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | IgG$_1$ | IgG$_{2a}$ | IgG$_{2b}$ | IgG$_3$ |
| Free 3VP2 | 0.086 | 0.074 | 0.075 | 0.125 |
| | 0.092 | 0.085 | 0.079 | 0.128 |
| | 0.095 | 0.086 | 0.080 | 0.135 |
| | 0.096 | 0.113 | 0.080 | 0.141 |
| | 0.099 | 0.180 | 0.084 | 0.149 |
| Liposomal 3VP2 | 0.110 | 0.100 | 0.079 | 0.151 |
| | 0.112 | 0.107 | 0.085 | 0.161 |
| | 0.123 | 0.124 | 0.093 | 0.185 |
| | 0.130 | 0.143 | 0.096 | 0.206 |
| | 0.181 | 0.144 | 0.096 | 0.277 |
| Liposomal 3VP2 + IL-2 | 0.101 | 0.101 | 0.070 | 0.153 |
| | 0.285 | 0.143 | 0.075 | 0.269 |
| | 0.341 | 0.334 | 0.076 | 0.323 |
| | 0.448 | 0.492 | 0.104 | 0.359 |
| | 1.021 | 0.935 | 0.142 | 0.499 |
| Kruskall-Wallis (one-way) | H=10.5 p<0.009 | H=5.95 0.01<p<0.049 | H=3.64 p>0.102 | H=10.5 p<0.009 |

TABLE 2

Secondary immune response to pre-S peptide

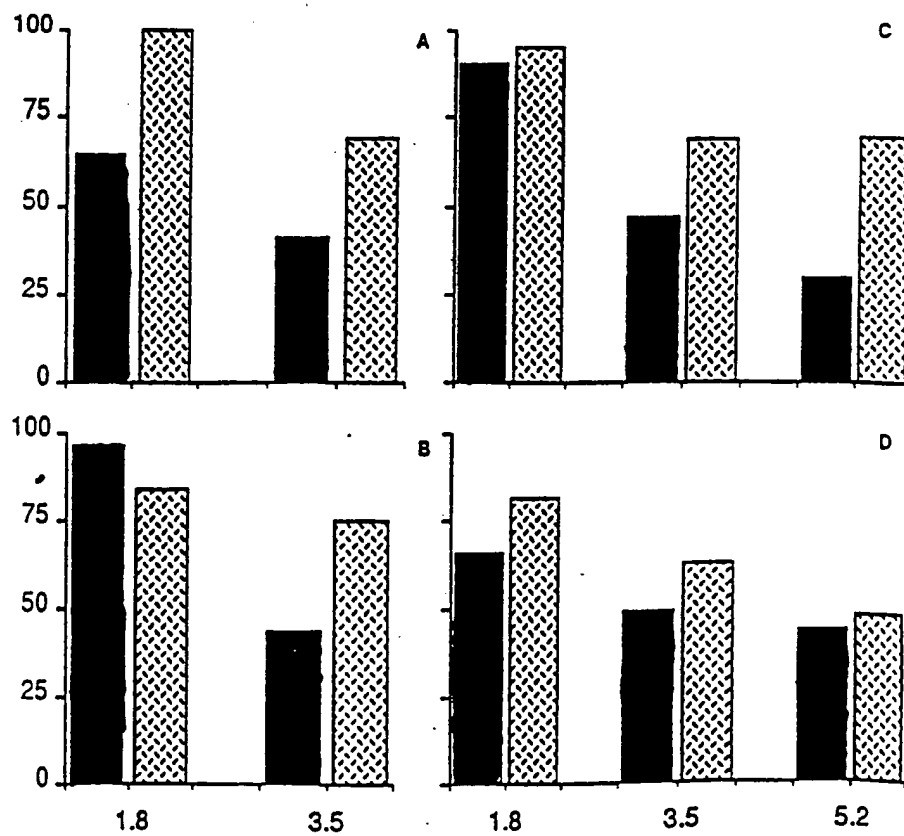| Peptide formulation | IgG$_1$ |
|---|---|
| Free pre-S peptide | 0.080 |
| | 0.090 |
| | 0.095 |
| | 0.100 |
| | 0.100 |
| Liposomal pre-S peptide | 0.075 |
| | 0.080 |
| | 0.085 |
| | 0.090 |
| | 0.110 |
| Liposomal pre-S and S peptides | 0.610 |
| | 0.680 |
| | 0.780 |
| | 0.850 |
| | 0.900 |

TABLE 3

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CLAIMS

1.   Liposomes having a mean diameter n t exceeding 200 nm
and containing at least 33 mg of one or more entrapped
substances per g liposome-forming material.

5    2.   Liposomes according to claim 1, wherein the one or
more substances is covalently linked to a lipid component
of the liposome.

3.   Liposomes according to either preceding claim, wherein
the lipid component is one or more of phosphatidylcholine,

10   cholesterol,        phosphatidylglycerol,        phosphatidyl-
ethanolamine,    phosphatidylserine,    phosphatidic    acid,
sphingomyelin or derivatives of these lipids.

4.   Liposomes according to claim 3, wherein the lipid
components are phosphatidylcholine and cholesterol.

15   5.   Liposomes according to any preceding claim, wherein
the one or more substances are selected from carbohydrates
and peptides.

6.   Liposomes   comprising,   co-entrapped   or   covalently
linked in the same liposome, a synthetic peptide and an

20   adjuvant   which   potentiates   the   immunogenicity   of   the
peptide.

7.   Liposomes according to claim 6, wherein the adjuvant
is recognised by or interacts with T cells.

8.   Liposomes according to claim 6, wherein the adjuvant

25   is a peptide having a T cell recognition site.

9.   Liposomes according to claim 6, wherein the adjuvant
is IL-2.

10.  Liposomes according to claim 6, wherein the adjuvant
comprises a peptide having a T cell recognition site and

30   IL-2.

11.  Liposomes according to any of claims 5 to 10, wherein
the peptide includes all or part of amino-acid residues
110-137 of Hepatitis B surface antigen.

12.  Liposomes   according   to   any   preceding   claim,   for
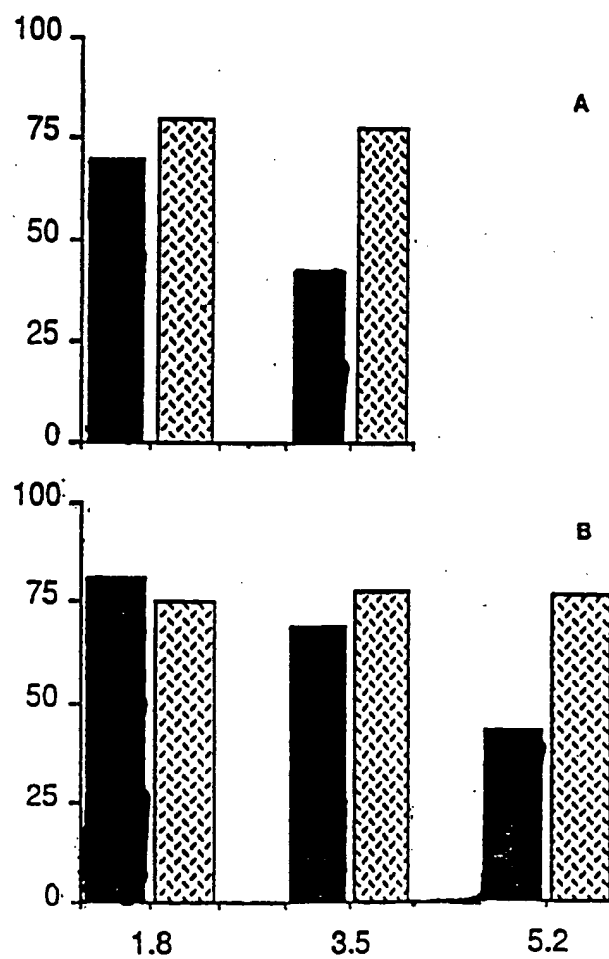
35   therapeutic use.

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13. A vaccine compositi n comprising liposomes according to any preceding claim and a physiologically-acceptable excipient.

14. Use of liposomes according to any of claims 5 to 11, for the manufacture of a medicament for use in eliciting an immunogenic response to the synthetic peptide.

15. A method for preparing liposomes having a mean diameter not exceeding 200 nm and containing one or more entrapped substances in an amount exceeding 10% of starting amounts.

16. A method for producing liposomes having a mean diameter not exceeding 200 nm, comprising:

(a) subjecting a mixture of lipid components and substances to be entrapped or covalently linked to the lipid component, to dehydration and controlled rehydration, to give large multilamellar vesicles; and

(b) subjecting the large multilamellar vesicles to microfluidisation.

17. A method according to claim 15 or claim 16, wherein the starting concentration of lipid is no more than 100 μmols per ml.

18. Liposomes according to any of claims 15 to 17, wherein the total starting concentration of all substances is no more than 10 mg per ml.

19. A method according to any of claims 15 to 18, for preparing liposomes having the characteristics of any of claims 1 to 11.
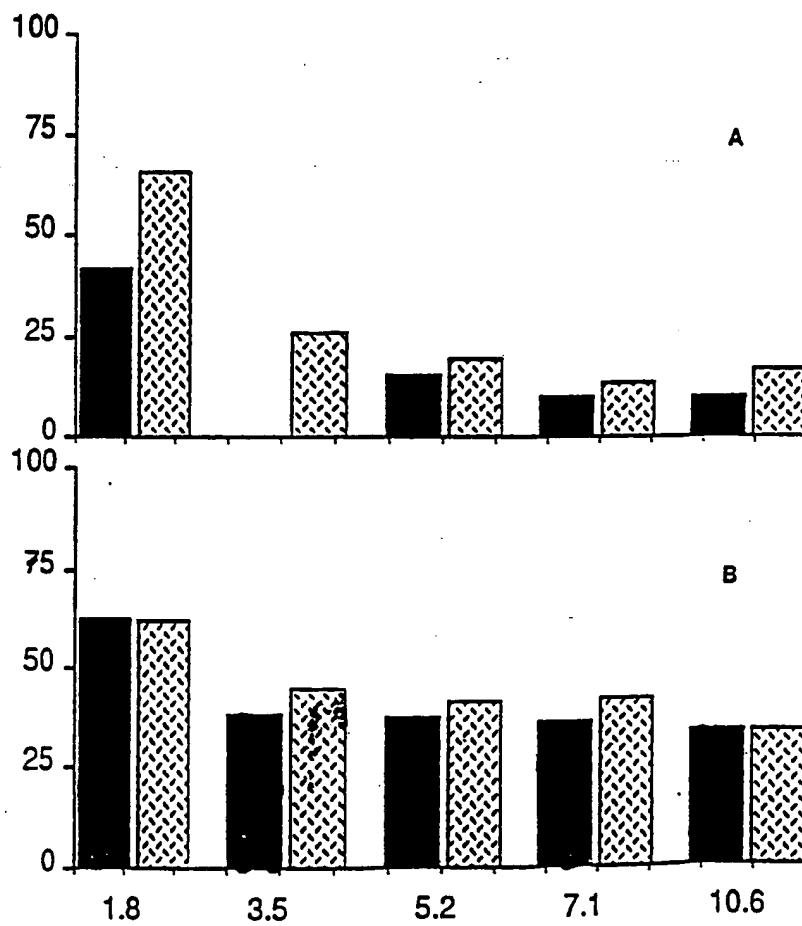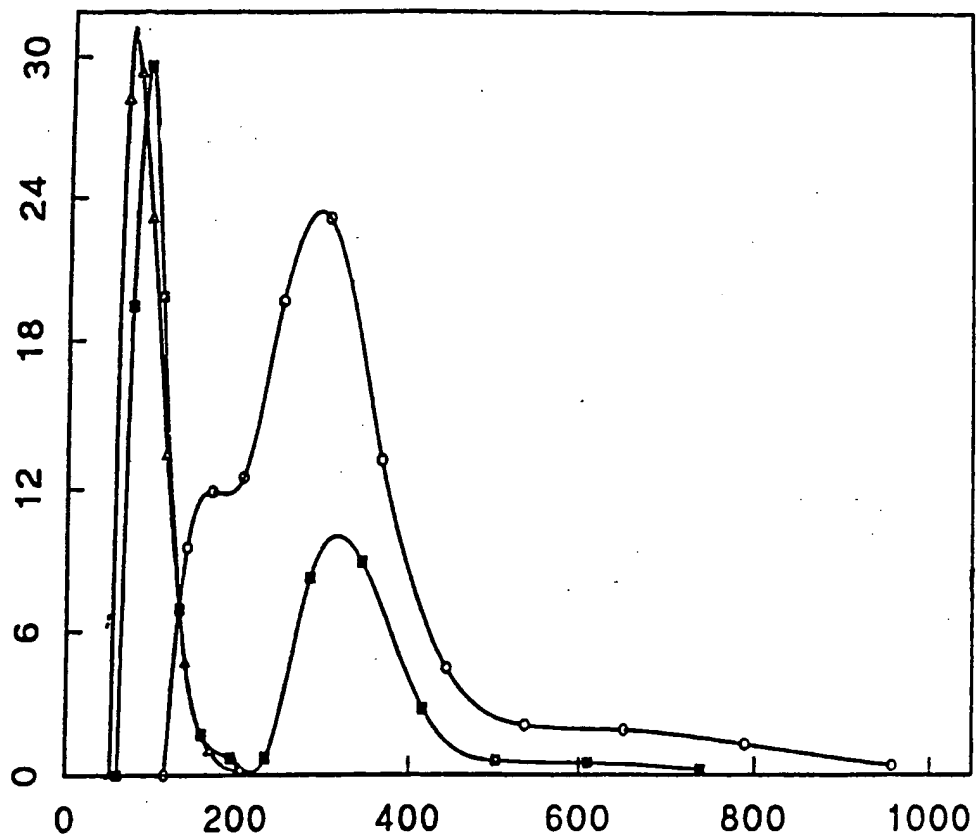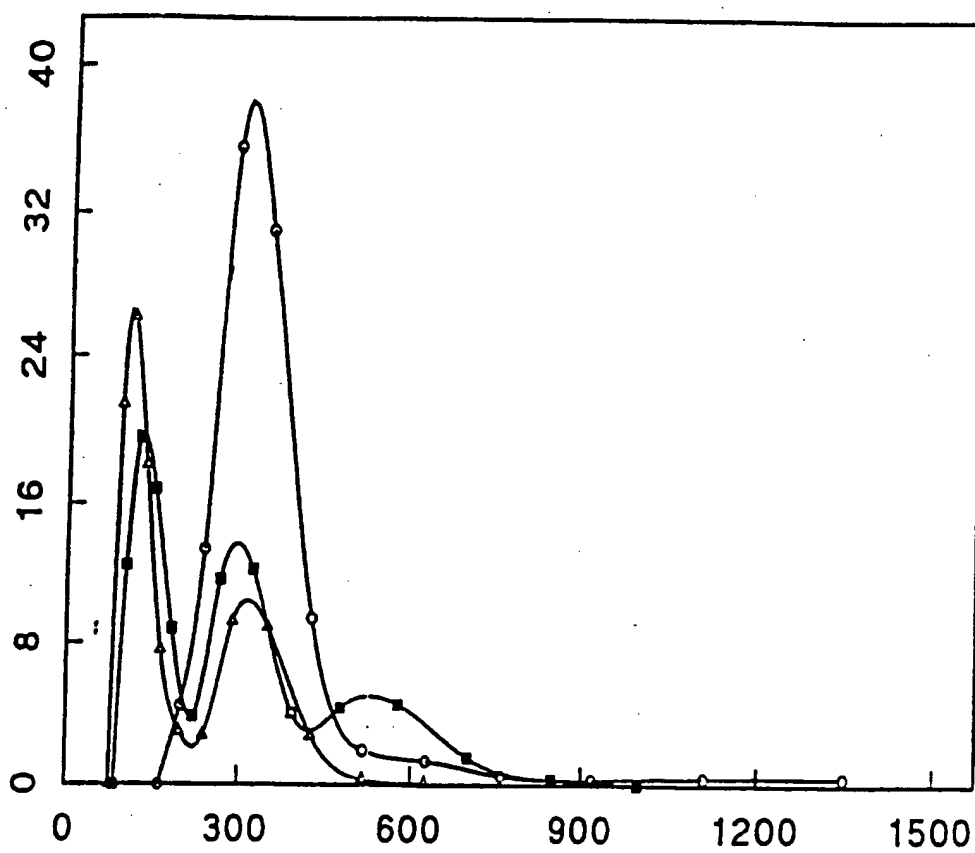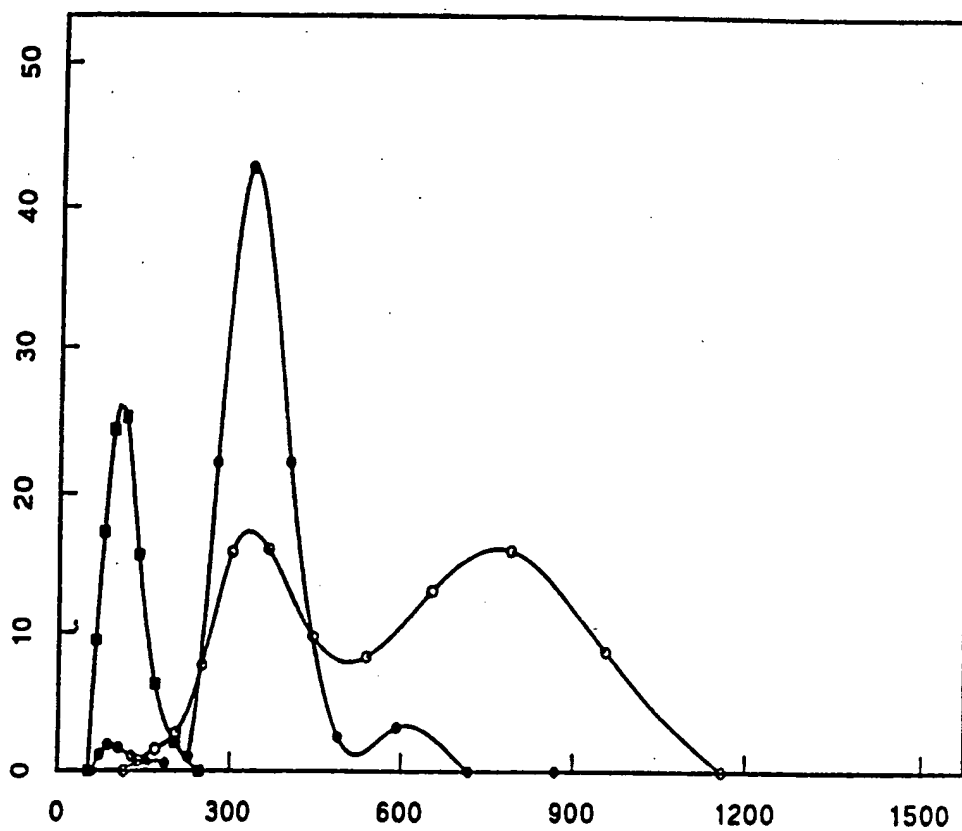
1/6

FIGURE 1

FIGURE 2

FIGURE 3

FIGURE 4

FIGURE 5

FIGURE 6

# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/GB 91/01547

## I. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER   (if several classification symbols apply, indicate all)[6]

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both National Classification and IPC

Int.Cl. 5 A61K9/127

## II. FIELDS SEARCHED

| Minimum Documentation Searched[7] | |
|---|---|
| Classification System | Classification Symbols |
| Int.Cl. 5 | A61K |

Documentation Searched other than Minimum Documentation
to the Extent that such Documents are Included in the Fields Searched[8]

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| Y | FR,A,2 624 741 (INSTITUT PASTEUR) 23 June 1989 | 5-10,13, 14 |
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° Special categories of cited documents :[10]

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

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"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

"&" document member of the same patent family

## IV. CERTIFICATION

| Date of the Actual Completion of the International Search | Date of Mailing of this International Search Report |
|---|---|
| 14 JANUARY 1992 | 3 0 JAN 1992 |
| International Searching Authority | Signature of Authorized  fficer |
| EUR  PEAN PATENT OFFICE | BENZ K. F. |

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